

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Stephen Gyor AICP, Case Manager
Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: December 31, 2013

SUBJECT: BZA Case 18686, 2001 Lawrence Ave NE. Special exception to permit a new 4-bay auto repair garage that does not comply with the minimum off-street parking spaces requirement

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning (OP) **supports** the following request for relief:

- § 2101.1 Off-Street Parking (12 spaces required, 5 spaces proposed).

The application includes a referral memorandum from the Zoning Administrator noting a requirement for special exception relief, but the application also mentions a request for variance relief. OP has tried to clarify this with the Zoning Administrator, but has evaluated this case as a variance, as it is the more arduous of the two forms of zoning relief.

II. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Address	2001 Lawrence Ave NE
Legal Description	Square 4106, Lot 144
Ward	5
Lot Characteristics	The subject site is located at Lot 144 in Square 4106 (hereinafter, the "Property"). The Property is triangular in shape and is currently vacant. Lawrence Avenue is a dead-end street; the right of way terminates at the intersection with Montana Avenue, which is located at a higher grade, but the portion of Lawrence Avenue adjacent to the site is not open to through traffic and there is no access to Montana Avenue.

Zoning	<p>Langdon Overlay: protects residences and residents from the adverse environmental, safety, and aesthetic impacts of abutting industrially zoned properties and uses; encourages retention of existing commercial and light manufacturing uses; allows new businesses under special controls designed to protect the quality of life and neighborhood character of the adjacent residential neighborhood. In this case, the lot is surrounded by other industrially zoned land and is over 500 feet from the closest residentially zoned land, so the provisions of the Langdon Overlay are not relevant.</p> <p>C-M-1 Commercial Light Manufacturing: Permits development of low bulk commercial and light manufacturing uses.</p>
Existing Development	Vacant lot
Historic District	NA
Adjacent Properties	The Subject Property is bordered by railroad tracks to the south, Montana Avenue to the west, a garage and parking lot to the north, and an excavation and demolition company to the east. The properties adjacent to the Subject Property are likewise zoned C-M-1.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The area is characterized by industrial uses, including several auto repair oriented businesses.

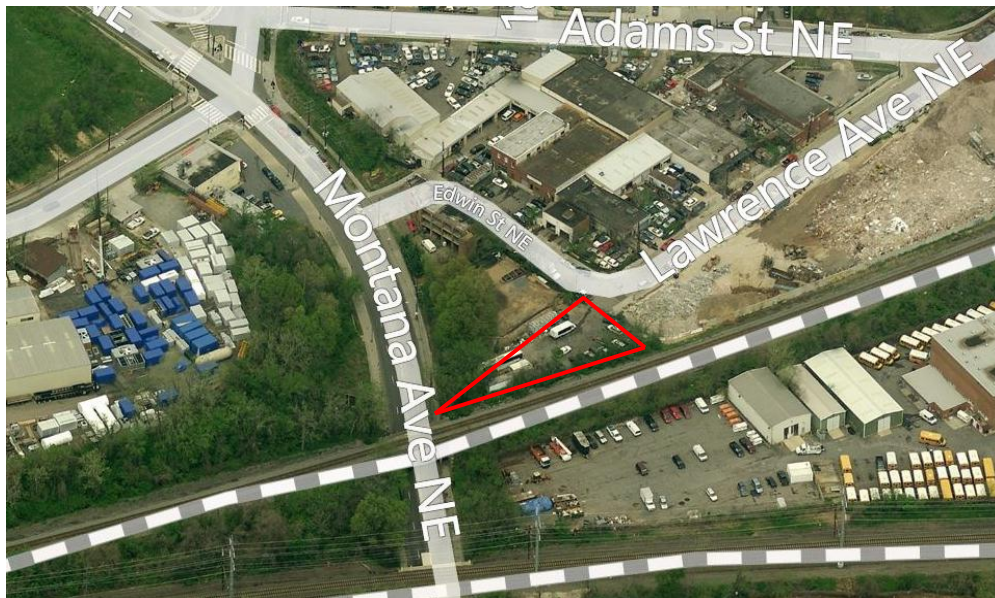
III. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

The Applicant proposes to construct a new 4-Bay Auto repair garage with accessory office space. The Subject Property is currently vacant. The proposal would require zoning relief from the requirement for off-street parking spaces, providing 5 of the required 12 spaces on-site. Any other cars would be parked on the street. The Applicant indicated that customer parking would be limited to customers requiring same-day auto-repair services and cars would not be left on the street overnight.

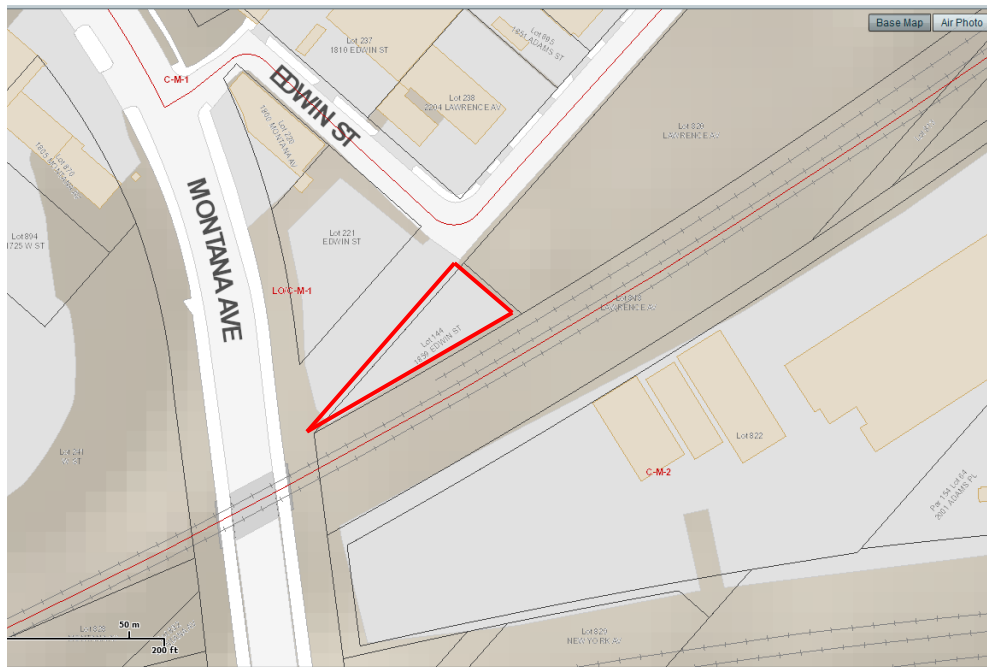
In 1990, a street closing request (SO 90-75) for the portion of Lawrence Avenue directly to the north of the Subject Property was approved by DDOT; however, the request was not finalized and that portion of Lawrence Avenue remains a public street.

IV. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and REQUESTED RELIEF

LO/C-M-1 Zone	Regulation	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Height § 400	40 ft. max.	NA	NA	None required
Lot Width § 401	NA	NA	31.33 ft. (average)	None required
Lot Area § 401	NA	NA	5,903 sf.	None required
Floor Area Ratio § 402	NA	NA	NA	None required
Lot Occupancy § 403	100% max.	NA	28%	None required
Rear Yard § 404	NA	NA	9 ft.	None required
Side Yard § 405	NA	NA	8.64 ft.	None required
Court § 406	NA	NA	NA	None required
Parking Spaces 2101.1	12 spaces	NA	5 spaces	Relief required



Subject Property



Subject Property

V. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

i. Exceptional Situation Resulting in a Practical Difficulty

Due to the shape, size and location of the property, strict compliance with the Zoning Regulations would result in a practical difficulty to the Applicant. The lot is narrow, triangular in shape, and located on a dead-end street, all of which precludes the Applicant's ability to provide the required number of parking spaces on the site.

ii. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good

The proposed relief would not result in a substantial detriment to the public good. The Applicant indicated that parking on-site would be limited to same-day services, and cars would not be left on the street overnight. DDOT indicates that tenants and property owners on Lawrence Avenue NE and Edwin Street NE often use public space to store and park vehicles to allow circulation within their facilities, resulting in an impediment to traffic circulation. The Applicant should ensure that vehicular traffic and parking resulting from operations does not obstruct circulation on adjacent streets. The Applicant should provide details concerning how customers would queue their vehicles while waiting for repairs. OP would support the Applicant limiting the number of customers waiting for service at any one time, as well as the mitigation of any impacts resulting from the lack of on-site parking by parking cars off-site at a neighboring facility.

iii. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations

There would be no substantial impairment to the intent, purpose and integrity of the Zoning Regulations and Map should the Board grant the requested variances. The proposed project would be located several hundred feet from nearby residential zones and would be consistent with both the C-M-1 zone and the Langdon Overlay.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 5C voted to support the Applicant's request for relief at its regularly scheduled meeting on November 20, 2013.

VII. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

The District Department of Transportation will provide a report under separated cover.